

IN THE ABSTRACT:

Please amend the Abstract as follows:

Process for producing an etching mask on a microstructure, in particular a semiconductor structure with trench capacitors, and corresponding uses of the etching mask which allow for extremely thin photoresist layers to be employed.

~~The present invention provides a process for producing an etching mask on a microstructure, in particular a semiconductor structure with one or more trench capacitors (5), which includes the following steps: providing a lower first, a middle second and an upper third hard mask layer (60; 70; 80) on a surface of the microstructure, the third hard mask layer (80) being significantly thinner than the first and second hard mask layers (60; 70); providing a photoresist mask (100) above the third hard mask layer (80); patterning the third hard mask layer (80) by etching chemistry using the photoresist mask (100); patterning the second hard mask layer (70) by etching chemistry using the patterned third hard mask layer (80), with the photoresist mask (100) being removed at the same time; patterning the first hard mask layer (60) by etching chemistry using the patterned second hard mask layer (70), with the third hard mask layer (80) being removed at the same time; and removing the patterned second hard mask layer (70).~~

A Replacement Sheet for the Abstract is attached hereto.